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FISHES SWALLOWED BY GAR PIKE

As is well known, gar pikes are highly predacious fish. They devour vast numbers of food and game fishes; and in localities where they are abundant they are treated as pests and destroyed by the thousand.

But although their voracious habits are well-known, there do not appear to be any definite records as to the size of the fish they swallow. This is due to the fact that only a very few out of the thousands of gars taken annually are opened, and among these it is rare to find one containing a fish newly ingested and still recognizable. The following two records accordingly seem worth preserving.

During a stay of seven weeks at Moon Lake, Miss., a few years ago, I saw over a dozen large alligator gars (*Lepisosteus tristæchus*), some of them over 9 feet long, cut up by negroes to smoke for use as food in the winter. In one instance I saw a fish taken from the stomach of a gar. It was a crappie, or calico bass (*Pomoxis sparoides*), 6 inches long.

The second record is the following: The New York Aquarium recently received an alligator gar which had been shipped alive from the lower Mississippi at Memphis, Tenn. It died on the way north, and on reaching the Aquarium was turned over to the Museum, where it was skeletonized. It measured 6 feet 6 inches in length, and on being opened it was found to contain a flat-nosed gar (*Lepisosteus platostomus*) 2 feet 2 inches in length, or exactly one-third its own length. The ingested fish had apparently been but recently swallowed; it was still intact, only the scales and head bones having begun to disintegrate in a few places. It lay in the alimentary canal with the head pointed toward the tail of its captor, indicating that it had been engulfed head first and not from behind.

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